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ABSTRACT

The paper describes operational changes made by the Seattle Archives Branch in the spring of 1977 in response to increased demands for reference services as a result of the television series, "Roots." The Branch serves a population of 6.75 million people in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Statistics from comparable periods in 1976 and 1977 show that, after the "Roots" broadcast, the Branch served 2.67 times more new researchers, 2.45 times more visitors, and 2.11 times more reference work units, including microfilm. In order to accomodate the heavy demand on reference files and microfilm reading equipment, the Branch instituted a reservation system for the use of microfilm readers. This was necessary because of high public interest in documents from the 1900 census, which are on microfilm only and which cannot circulate on interinstitutional loan. Additional changes included development of a 17-minute videocassette to orient researchers; a written procedure for selecting, locating, and using a roll of microfilm; and installation of microfilm cabinets in the research room. The author believes public interest in genealogy will continue, and concludes the paper with a selective annotated list of 18 publications on the use of family and local history. (AV)

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"IN THE AFTERMATH OF 'ROOTS:' THE EXPERIENCE OF THE SEATTLE ARCHIVES BRANCH"

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

by Phillip E. Lothyan

A paper read at the 41st annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 6, 1977, in the session entitled "Reference Services for Genealogists"

SP 010 555

IN THE AFTERMATH OF "ROOTS": THE EXPERIENCE OF THE SEATTLE ARCHIVES BRANCH

It wasn't as though we hadn't been forewarned. As Chief of the Seattle Archives Branch in 1976, I had seen our reference services expand dramatically over the past five years. More growth was expected as we began the new fiscal year of 1977. Hence the steady stream of published announcements about a forthcoming book named Roots caused no alarm, not even when we learned that the book would be serialized as a television production. As a result, the Seattle Archives Branch found its procedures, equipment, and search room configuration inadequate during an unprecedented growth in demands for reference services. However, sheer persistence on the part of our staff carried us through the crisis following the "Roots" television broadcast.

Before going any further in the development of this paper, I would like to remind my listeners that I will be speaking about the operations of a single Archives Branch of the National Archives of the United States, a part of the General Services Administration. The Seattle Archives Branch serves a population of some 6.75 million people in the States of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.[1/] We are 10th out of 11 Archives Branches in terms of the size of population served. The Chicago Archives Branch constituency is the largest, totaling about 45 million people. The Chicago Archives Branch is also first in the number of institutions of higher education served, some 491 to our 101. The smallest Archives Branch in terms of population (5.9 million) and similar institutions (90) is the Denver Archives Branch.[2/]

The respective sizes of our regional populations and the numbers of institutions of higher education help place the Seattle Archives Branch in perspective as far as potential transactions with the public, but distance is also a factor

in who uses archival resources. We note that the Seattle Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) population in 1974 was 1,421,869, making it 19th in the nation and 9th out of the 11 Archives Branches in terms of SMSA rank. Only Kansas City and Denver were smaller. Our sister Archives Branches to the south far outrank us. The San Bruno Archives Branch, located in the San Francisco-Oakland SMSA, and the Laguna Niguel Archives Branch, between the Los Angeles-Long Beach and the San Diego SMSA's, had populations of 3,109,519 and 8,389,929 respectively. 3/

Having established an organizational and demographic perspective, we need to look at historical statistics of the number and type of researchers visiting the 11 Archives Branches. During the period FY 72-76, just before the "Roots" broadcast, some 14,660 Researcher Identification Cards were issued to all Archives Branches, 65.6 percent of which were to genealogists. During the same period, the Seattle Archives Branch issued 1,822 cards, 37.7 percent of which were to genealogists. However, since FY 73, that percentage rose from 9.6 percent to 72.1 percent in FY 76. 4/ In another comparison, the Central Reference Division in the National Archives Building recorded a total of 72,803 cards during FY 72-76, some 53.8% of which were to genealogical researchers. Central Reference Division percentages of researcher cards issued to genealogists were much more stable than in the regions, from a low of 51 percent in FY 73 to a high of 57 percent of FY 76. 5/

Not only was the mix of regional researchers shifting rather dramatically toward genealogists, but the total number of researchers also showed significant gains. Of the 14,660 cards issued in five years by all Archives Branches, 53% were issued in FY 76 alone. The increase for all Archives

Branches in FY 76 was 2.43 times that of FY 75. The Seattle Archives Branch issued 56 percent of all of its FY 72-76 cards during FY 76 alone. 6/ In comparison, Central Reference Division's FY 76 cards were 27.5 percent of all cards issued FY 72-76, and the increase in FY 76 cards was 1.19 times that of FY 75. 7/

Thus, by the end of FY 76, we in Regional Archives Branches were acutely aware of the existence of a volatile new constituency. As early as April 1975, the Seattle Archives Branch was "trying to anticipate reference service patterns which will affect the ultimate growth of Archives Branch staffs." 8/ During FY 76 the Office of the National Archives authorized individual Archives Branch ceilings of up to 6 persons, with the highest ceilings going to the Laguna Niguel and San Bruno Archives Branches. The Denver and Atlanta Branches joined Seattle at 5 persons by June 30, 1976. 9/

Little did we know that in a short time Alex Haley's work would ignite the imagination of hundreds of new researchers, set them to spinning additional thousands of reels of microfilm in search of their roots, and stretch our small staffs to their limits.

Seattle Archives Branch statistics for the period January, February, and March 1977, indicate the threshold of activity following the "Roots" broadcast, as compared to the same period in 1976: 10/

	Jan. 1976	Jan. 1977	Feb. 1976	Feb. 1977	Mar. 1976	Mar. 1977	2nd Qtr. 1976	2nd Qtr. 1977
Written information services	76	199	300	148	95	190	471	537
Oral information services	608	672	533	722	673	818	1814	2212
1900 census rolls	835	1496	854	1833	1748	2895	3437	6224

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	Jan. 1976	Jan. 1977	Feb. 1976	Feb. 1977	Mar. 1976	Mar. 1977	2nd Qtr. 1976	2nd Qtr. 1977
All other microfilm	512	1496	643	1555	818	1897	1973	4947
Microfilm loans	168	598	136	650	316	696	620	1944
Other items furnished	113	804	224	891	86	850	423	2545
Total reference units	2312	5265	2690	5799	3736	7345	8738	18,409
Total reference hours	325	544	312	600	378	600	1015	1744
Reproduction units	1746	977	1263	1819	3303	553	6312	3349
Reproduction hours	17	9	11	7	10	3	38	19
Researcher cards	88	266	96	251	123	304	307	821
Researcher visits	307	623	313	806	387	1043	1007	2472

The difference in staff between the periods of comparison was one additional person in 1977. Therefore, when one compares second quarter FY 77 against the same period in FY 76, we see the Seattle Archives Branch orienting 2.67 times more new researchers, 2.45 times more visitors of all kinds, and 2.11 times more reference work units, including microfilm.

That the second quarter FY 77 was an anomaly within a higher threshold is evident by a comparison with first and third quarters of FY 77: 11/

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter
Written information services	482	537	226
Oral information services	1416	2212	1810
1900 census rolls	5381	6224	6733
All other microfilm	3659	4947	4583
Microfilm loans	1121	1944	2349
Other items furnished	1624	2545	1995

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	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter
Total reference units	13,683	18,409	17,694
Total reference hours	1,633	1,744	2,063
Reproduction units	6,741	3,349	2,447
Reproduction hours	52	19	27
Researcher cards	356	821	544
Researcher visits	1,289	2,472	1,953

It is evident that the initial surge of activity during second quarter FY 77 has subsided, but not completely. The "Roots" phenomenon is, therefore, showing signs of persisting in Seattle.

Before discussing the problems of the Seattle Archives Branch in dealing with an unprecedented demand for reference services, I would like to share with you a February 17, 1977, videotape tour of our facility, courtesy of KOMO-TV, an ABC affiliate in Seattle. This videotape illustrates the kind of publicity we received as well as the nature of our facility. I would like you as viewers to keep in mind that our Archives Branch must maintain a systematic program of accessioning, arranging, describing, preserving, referencing, and publicizing historical Federal records from the Pacific Northwest.

(Viewing of videotape, 10 minutes.)

As the videotape suggests, the Archives Branch must balance its resources between the administration of its textual records and its microfilm publications. The pressures of providing microfilm reference services must not

inhibit the transfer of historic Federal records from the States of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington into the legal and physical custody of the National Archives and Records Service. Nor should microfilm reference services prevent the arrangement, description, or preservation of these records. Given these goals and the reality of hordes of novice researchers descending upon the Archives Branch, how does one reconcile the two?

In the balance of this paper, I will review some of the steps the Seattle Archives Branch took in its tightwire act. First of all, we did not do certain things. We did not obtain an unlisted telephone number, change our operating hours to 11:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., or refer people back to the Federal Information Center. We remained as accessible to the public after the "Roots" broadcast as before, but I have to admit the alternatives were tempting.

Perhaps the most important procedural change we made was installing a reservation system. ~~Prior to~~ Before 1977, we had established priorities in the use of our limited number of readers on a first come-first served basis for a two-hour period. For most of 1975 and 1976, minor adjustments in this system took care of such problems as how long could out of town researchers stay on a reader, in what order should patrons finishing their two-hour allotment be placed relative to the patron just entering the search room, and the like. With the continual rise in the number of researchers visiting our Center, however, more and more patrons "stood by" waiting for access to a reader. During the peak of the demand for microfilm reference services, we had some 95 researchers a day trying to use a dozen readers and the situation became chaotic. Clearly, the first come-first served policy of limited access would no longer do.

At first glance, the establishment of a reservations policy might seem to be a minor adjustment in daily operations. However, the more we thought about such a policy, the more questions came to mind. The first ones were bureaucratic. If our operating hours published in the Federal Register were 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for Federal holidays, by what authority could we require a taxpaying citizen to appear on certain days of the week? If we were to initiate a reservations policy, would we be consistent with the Laguna Niguel or San Bruno Archives Branches in Region 9, or with any of the Archives Branches? What would be the reaction of the researcher visiting the National Archives and the several Archives Branches, only to discover the barrier of a reservations policy? We had no authority to publish our new policy in the Federal Register and thereby make it binding on the public. Furthermore, our regulations, directives, and operating manual did not directly address the issue, and yet the need grew ever more urgent. If we set in motion the administrative machinery to resolve the problem, we could not expect immediate relief.

Other questions came to mind. When should the reservations policy take effect in terms of lead time? Tomorrow, or a month? How good were our communications? Would our regular patrons coming in by car pool from Canada, Oregon, and Eastern Washington get word of the change before they made a long trip? How much time should local residents have on our readers versus long-distance commuters? How would we take reservations, and how would we confirm them? What impact would yet another change have on everyone? Most importantly, would the administration of the reservations system require more staff time than the old system? I'm sure other questions would come to mind to everyone ~~contomplating~~ considering such a change, but we did not have the

luxury of contemplating all the possible ramifications. When we felt we had enough information, we acted.

Our solution to the problems of establishing a reservations system was not to restrict the times during which records would be available, nor to further restrict microfilmed publications of the records. Instead, we chose to further limit the use of the microfilm readers, a critical part of public access to census records outside Washington, DC, where microfilm copies are often the only means of access to the records. 12/ In the case of the 1900 census, access to our microfilm readers is essential because microfilm publications associated with the 1900 census are restricted and do not circulate on interinstitutional loan. 13/ We based our restriction on the accountability of the Center Director for program equipment in his Center, knowing that the Code of Federal Regulations did not explicitly address the issue of public use of our program equipment.

Far more than regulatory authority, public acceptance provided the basis for our current reservations policy. No amount of regulations would have persuaded us to maintain a reservations system in the teeth of public opposition, unless we were specifically enjoined to do so. Public reaction to our reservations system has been very favorable. We ask patrons to send us a postcard 10 days in advance of the time they want to visit the Center. We also encourage them to list an alternate date and time in case we cannot place them in their first choice. The patron is sent an annotated copy of a form letter confirming the requested reservation. Patrons may make reservations in person for the first available opening in the schedule, but we discourage telephone requests for reservations. The Center constantly

is in communication with 84 Federal agencies in 400 locations in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, as well as other National Archives installations across the country. The Archives Branch wishes to disturb Federal Telecommunications System traffic with the Center as little as possible.

To accommodate patrons wishing to make reservations, we have set aside some 18 of our 24 microfilm readers, depending upon if all the readers are operating. Six readers remain on a first come-first served basis for patrons dropping into the Center without notice. If all six readers are used, we impose a two-hour limit on the six and begin putting "stand-by" patrons on unoccupied readers in the reserved block of readers. In contrast to the stand-by readers, reserved readers may be used for four hours by residents of the four counties surrounding the Center and for eight hours by everyone else. In other words, our reservations system is an option on the old system of first come-first served, with the incentive being a doubling or quadrupling of guaranteed time on a reader. Parenthetically, a patron may reserve up to five days at a time, a block of one week, or five days scattered throughout our 30-day control period, further ensuring consistent access to a reader. Finally, for academic researchers, we will set aside a reader indefinitely upon written request.

The results of our reservations system have been beneficial to our staff as well as the public. One attendant is able to administer the reservation system in addition to performing routine microfilm reference services, with occasional assistance by a second attendant as we reach our capacity of 24 microfilm readers in operation. The hectic atmosphere of ten to twenty stand-by patrons making endless inquiries of refugee staff members is long

gone. The only time additional staff members are recalled to the search room is during peak conditions, or when textual researchers require specialized reference services. Our improved microfilm reference operations have allowed us to integrate interinstitutional loans of microfilm publications into the duties of one room attendant and to assign administrative duties to the second attendant. As a result, two persons handle all phases of microfilm reference.

The advent of a reservations policy is not the sole explanation for the increased efficiencies in our reference services. We have developed a 17-minute videotape cassette to orient new researchers; a written procedure for selecting, locating, and using a roll of microfilm; and a charge-out file to inform patrons when missing rolls of microfilm are expected to return from interinstitutional loan. All of these procedures have greatly reduced the number of repetitive questions formerly asked of our staff. If you are interested and time permits, I can display our videotaped orientation here or I can loan it to your institution for review.

In addition to establishing new procedures and refining old ones, we have improved public access to our census microfilm publications by the use of microfilm cabinets in our research room. At first, we had 24 rolls of microfilm packed in rectangular boxes placed on their sides in library shelves, but the boxes broke down very quickly in the hands of an impatient public. Next, we "liberated" Selective Service System (SSS) card file cabinets when that organization greatly curtailed its operations in Washington State. Finally, we received a long awaited order of locking microfilm filing cabinets, into which we put all our census microfilm, including the restricted 1900

census. The renovated SSS card file cabinets were moved into the main aisle in the storage area adjacent to the search room, and all noncensus microfilm publications were placed there.

To expedite the research room attendant's access to 1900 census microfilm publications, we made a single key to all the locking cabinets and provided duplicate keys to selected staff members. In short, we struck a balance between security and access in providing reference services to the 1900 census. We had no such concerns for the self-service operation, in which the patron is allowed to withdraw but not to refile census rolls of microfilm, 1790-1890. The research room attendant refiles the self-service microfilm from collecting bins placed behind a row of microfilm readers. None of our microfilm holdings occupies Center shelving, thus increasing our storage capacity for textual records.

Staging highly active census microfilm publications in our research room cabinets was an important step in improving access to the film, but the pressure continued for the use of the readers, despite the stabilizing influence of the reservations policy. The Office of the National Archives and the Office of the Executive Director kept a close watch on the statistical reports of all the Archives Branches, consulted with the Archivist of the United States, and released funds for the purchase of new microfilm readers. By mid-summer, all three Region 9 Archives Branches (Laguna Niguel, San Bruno, and Seattle) had acquired 14 new machines. In the case of Seattle, the addition of the new readers doubled our microfilm reading capacity.

The placement of new microfilm cabinets in a permanent location in the search room and the selection of a final order of microfilm publications within the cabinets posed only minor problems. The determination of the room configuration of the order of readers in relation to cabinets, reference shelves, and registration and orientation tables was a bit more complicated, as we were constrained by the furniture and room fixtures on hand. Appendix A contains a room sketch outlining the placement of furniture and equipment to facilitate the flow of researchers into and out of the room.

In reviewing the room sketch, I would like to note the following features:

1. The research room is split into a textual reference zone and a microfilm reference zone. Security precautions are different for each area.

2. The office area is separated from the research room by glass partitions to allow administrative, reference, and surveillance activities to proceed without disturbing patrons.

3. The registration table is the first control point for both textual and microfilm researchers. After completing registration, the two types of researchers separate and rarely interact.

4. The orientation table displays the 17 minute videotape acquainting the microfilm patron with our microfilm reference services. We do not rely on a videotape for orienting textual researchers.

5. The reading table is for the use of novice researchers as they review our self-service procedures for selecting and locating a roll of census microfilm, 1790-1890. The written procedure also explains how to select a roll of 1900 census microfilm, which the room attendant will provide.

6. The census finding aids are located on library shelves adjacent to

the microfilm cabinets.

7. "Look down" microfilm readers are located on standard library tables; "vertical" readers are placed in carrels in which the writing surface has been lowered below the normal table height. Dropping the height of the viewing screen on "vertical" readers reduces neck and eye strain for patrons wearing bifocals or trifocals.

8. Similar models of microfilm readers have been clustered together in rows for ease of maintenance. Each machine has been numbered and a service record is compiled. The 18 reserved readers include a mix of all models, as does the standby block of machines. This grouping allows each type of patron some flexibility in the choice of readers.

9. Electrical receptacles arise from conduits placed in the floor for readers located away from the usual wall outlets. We avoid extension cords if possible.

10. The floor conduits were also designed for telephone cables, such as the one used by the University of Washington to communicate 1900 census data from our research room to computers on the University campus, some three miles away.

11. Public restrooms are accessible in the search room.

12. The microfilm photocopier is located adjacent to the microfilm readers, facilitating a quick transfer between machines for reproducing paper copies of positive microfilm frames.

13. The self-service microfilm collecting bins are located in an inactive aisle where the various publications can be staged for refile.

14. More study carrels have been ordered to provide separate reading stations for textual reference.

15. The fire exit in the southeast corner of the room is electrically monitored. Unauthorized use trips an electronic audible alarm.

16. The fire escape route retraces the researchers' path to the search room. Our fire bill calls for a staff member to evacuate the Archives Storage Vault, the research room, the restroom, and the office areas, including an adjacent interlibrary loan processing area.

17. The research room is protected by sprinklers.

18. The double doors in the southwest corner of the room provide access to the main corridor of the building, where noncensus microfilm publications, about one-half of our microfilm holdings, are stored in cabinets. The double doors use the same key as the door to the adjacent Archives Storage Vault.

19. The search room lights are controlled by circuit breaker from an adjacent microfilm camera room. The pattern of lighting is changed to accommodate the diverse needs of textual as well as microfilm researchers, and the result is a compromise.

20. The floor is brown, gold, and black weave indoor-outdoor carpeting on concrete, and the ceiling is off-white acoustical tile. The walls are dark walnut veneer panels. The carrels, tables, and shelves have laminated wood grain tops to match the walls, and the chair seats and backs are bright red, yellow, orange, and green accents to room decor. Microfilm cabinets and readers are generally painted off-white. The appearance of the room under full and partial illumination is harmonious as well as functional.

21. The research room's normal temperature and humidity is the same as the Archives Storage Vault, in the range of 70°F and 50% relative humidity. However, heavy use of our microfilm readers can raise the temperature significantly.

22. One search room attendant's desk is in the research room, adjacent to the textual reference tables, and does not have a telephone. The other attendant's desk is in the office area and does have a telephone. The location of these desks permits cross-angle surveillance on textual researchers.

Looking backward at the evolution of the room configuration, I can see that it was a gradual process within the fixed features of the room. As we added new equipment to meet the needs of ever more numerous researchers, we rearranged the furniture and the old equipment several times. In other words, we had no master plan but continual experimentation. Every move had an additional cost in staff time spent reorienting old researchers to the new locations of favorite readers, microfilm finding aids, and microfilm publications. Gradually, however order was restored.

It should be kept in mind that what carried us through the aftermath of the "Roots" phenomenon was dedicated staff. We had tinkered with reference procedures long before "Roots," and we did so frantically afterwards; we had made do with antiquated or adapted equipment before the flood of researchers descended on us, and we made good use of the new equipment after the deluge was over; and over the years, we had changed the configuration of the furniture and equipment as microfilm reference services became dominant, gradually committing two-thirds of the room to the specialized use of microfilm publications. This use of space was the exact opposite of the room configuration when we opened it to the public in the fall of 1972, when one-third of the

room was reserved for microfilm reference services. Through all of these changes, members of the Archives Branch perservered. As old staff members departed, their replacements quickly adopted old procedures and adapted them to meet unprecedented demands. As I write this, Seattle Archives Branch staff members are being recognized by a General Services Administration Special Achievement Award for their exceptional efforts during the period January 3 to March 31, 1977. 14/

I do not like to think of what could have happened to us if we had had improperly motivated or trained personnel. No amount of new procedures, equipment, or reconfiguring of the search room would have carried us through the crisis without employees performing far above their job requirements. Equally important, our staff members struggled to complete their assigned projects, thus keeping our annual work program in balance. In addition, selected staff members had additional responsibilities of coaching archives interns on their projects, thus maintaining an important academic volunteer program with Western Washington University (WWU) and the University of Washington (UW). In turn, our training of two WWU archives interns in the administration of Bonneville Power Administration records prepared them for participation in a National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant to WWU to survey public utility district records in Oregon and Washington. As a result of yeoman personal reference services, our annual work program and academic liaison projects survived largely intact until our new procedures, equipment and room arrangement came into play and relieved us of a great burden.

After it became clear that the "Roots" phenomenon was persisting, magazine writers began asking what were the underlying causes of widespread and enduring interest in one's ethnic origins. 15/ I wish I fully understood the many synergistic forces operating in the field of family history, but I do not. To me the term family history suggests such diverse modes of research as preparing genealogical pedigrees, sophisticated demographic analyses, oral history interviews, exhibits of folklore and memorabilia, new pedagogical techniques, preservation briefs for historic buildings, and localized biographical studies. Better writers than me have sketched many of these convergent and divergent interests. I have prepared a selected, annotated list of unusual publications on the subject of family and community history, which I will share with you as Appendix B to this paper. It should quickly orient you to popular and professional literature on important facets of "family history."

If we in the National Archives system are no better in our field than meteorologists in predicting atmospheric disturbances, then we have much to do in forecasting public interest in our holdings. Public opinion is particularly hard to interpret in the case of the "Roots" phenomenon because the public holds contradictory views. On the one hand, we note that in a recent Gallup poll, 29 percent of the public was "very interested" in their family's history, and 40 percent were "somewhat interested." On the other hand, a majority of persons in a recent Harris survey were concerned that their privacy was being threatened by the Federal Government and credit companies. 16/ What legislation will result in terms of access or restrictions, and what effect present and future legislation will have on requests for reference services we do not know.

It is likely, however, that researchers will continue to be motivated by age-old concerns to use whatever records are open to the public. As a Roman orator put it,

> "To remain ignorant of things that happened before you were born is to remain a child. What is human life worth unless it is incorporated into the lives of one's ancestors and set in an historical context?" 17/

Even Don Quixote knew the value of genealogy in his memorable quest:

> "For, Sancho, there are two sorts of Originals in the World; some who sprung from mighty Kings and Princes, by little and little have been so lessen'd and obscur'd, that the Estates and Titles of the following Generations have dwindled to nothing, and ended in a Point like a Pyramid; others, who from mean and low Beginnings still rise and rise, till at last they are rais'd to the very Top of human Greatness: So vast the Difference is, that those who were Something are now Nothing, and those that were Nothing are now Something. And therefore who knows but that I may be one of those whose Original is so illustrious; which being handsomely made out, after due Examination, ought undoubtedly to satisfy the King, my Father-in-law." 18/

And yet, there are others who would rather not know of the mortality of man. Isaac Asimov quotes Robert Burns in his poem "To a Mouse" as he apologizes for destroying its nest with a plow:

> "Still thou are blest compar'd wi' me!
> "The present only toucheth thee:
> "But oh, I backward cast my e'e
> "On prospects drear!
> "An' forward tho' I canna see,
> "I guess an' fear!" 19/

Asimov muses that our secular, modern society, seems to have deprived itself of the classical escapes (of extended family and an after life) from the burden of Knowledge of human mortality, ~~by~~ becoming ever more time conscious:

> "Is it entirely a coincidence that the most materialistic subdivision of our most materialistic culture, the twentieth-century American, is never seen anywhere without his wrist-watch? At no time, apparently, dare he be unaware of the sweep of the second hand and of the ticks that mark off the inexorable running out of the sands of his life." 20/

Could it be that mid-twentieth century man has rediscovered in the study of his ancestors' lives, as Cicero suggests, the meaning of his own? If this bit of speculation has a ring of truth in it, then we must expect a new cycle of public interest in our resources. We will try to balance present demands for reference services with the needs of future researchers as we continue the traditional archival functions of accessioning, arranging, and describing regional Federal records in our custody.

FOOTNOTES

1/ In addition to these States, we circulate National Archives microfilm publications to the Canadian Provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon Territory. However, the number of Canadians visiting our Center is miniscule, and the number of loans to Canadian institutions remains small.

2/ See tables 1 and 2 in memorandum of May 2, 1975, Chief, Seattle Archives Branch (10NCN), to Region 9 Commissioner (9N), National Archives and Records Service, San Francisco, California.

3/ World Almanac (1975), p. 148. The 11 Archives Branches ranked by SMSA are listed as follows:

Archives Branch Rank	Archives Branch	SMSA Area	SMSA Rank
1	Bayonne, NJ	New York, NY-NJ	1
2	Laguna Niguel, CA	Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	2
3	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL	3
4	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia, PA-NJ	4
5	San Bruno, CA	San Francisco-Oakland, CA	6
6	Boston, MA	Boston, MA	8
7	Fort Worth, TX	Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX	12
8	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta, GA	18
9	Seattle, WA	Seattle-Everett, WA	19
10	Kansas City, MO	Kansas City, MO-KS	25
11	Denver, CO	Denver-Boulder, CO	27

The SMSA populations of Los Angeles-Long Beach and San Diego were added together to estimate the contiguous population of the Laguna Niguel Archives Branch.

4/ Data obtained from Figure R-1, "Researcher Cards Issued by Regional Archives Branches" in Nancy Allard et.al., "The Study of Users of the Records of the National Archives," Planning and Analysis Division, Office of the Executive Director, National Archives and Records Service, GSA, October 1976.

5/ Data obtained from Figures 1 and 3 in ibid.

6/ Data obtained from Figure R-1 in ibid.

7/ Data obtained from Figure 1 in ibid.

8/ Memorandum of 10NCN to 9N dated May 2, 1975.

9/ Data obtained from "Regional Statistical Summary," Office of the National Archives, National Archives & Records Service, GSA, for the period ending June 30, 1976. The total number of positions in all Archives Branches today is 54 persons, according to Charles South, Regional Archives Coordinator, September 22, 1977.

10/ Data obtained from Seattle Archives Branch "Statistical Summaries," (GSA Form 7096).

11/ Ibid.

12/ Patrons may also obtain access in the regions by borrowing census microfilm from Archives Branches or the Genealogical Society Library in Salt Lake City, visiting the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., or hiring researchers in Salt Lake City, Washington, D.C., or in other cities adjacent to Archives Branches.

13/ See "Procedures Governing Access to the Schedules of the Census of Population of 1900" in Code of Federal Regulations, Title 41, Chapter 105, section 61.5303-29a(1976), p. 635.

14/ Those being recognized are Diane Bennion, Dwight Grinolds, William Klatte, David Piff, and Valrie Shedwin.

15/ See for example, "Everybody's Search for Roots," Newsweek, July 4, 1977, pp. 26-36, an article associating popular interest in one's ethnic origins with the Bicentennial. Of course, journalists were fascinated with the same subject before the Bicentennial; see People Weekly (April 26, 1976), pp. 62-66.

16/ As reported in the Society of American Archivists Newsletter (May 1977), p. 10.

17/ Cicero, Orator, XXXIV as quoted in Great Treasury of Western Thought, edited by Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren (New York and London: R. R. Bowker Company, 1977), p. 958.

18/ Cervantes, Don Quixote, I, 21 as quoted in ibid., p. 147.

19/ As quoted in Isaac Asimov, Of Time and Space and Other Things (New York: Avon Books, 1975), p. 8.

20/ Isaac Asimov, ibid., p. 9. Asimov refers the reader to Genesis 3:19 "... for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return..." as a Hebrew myth of the Garden of Eden, in which the discovery of death is equated with the advent of knowledge in the world.

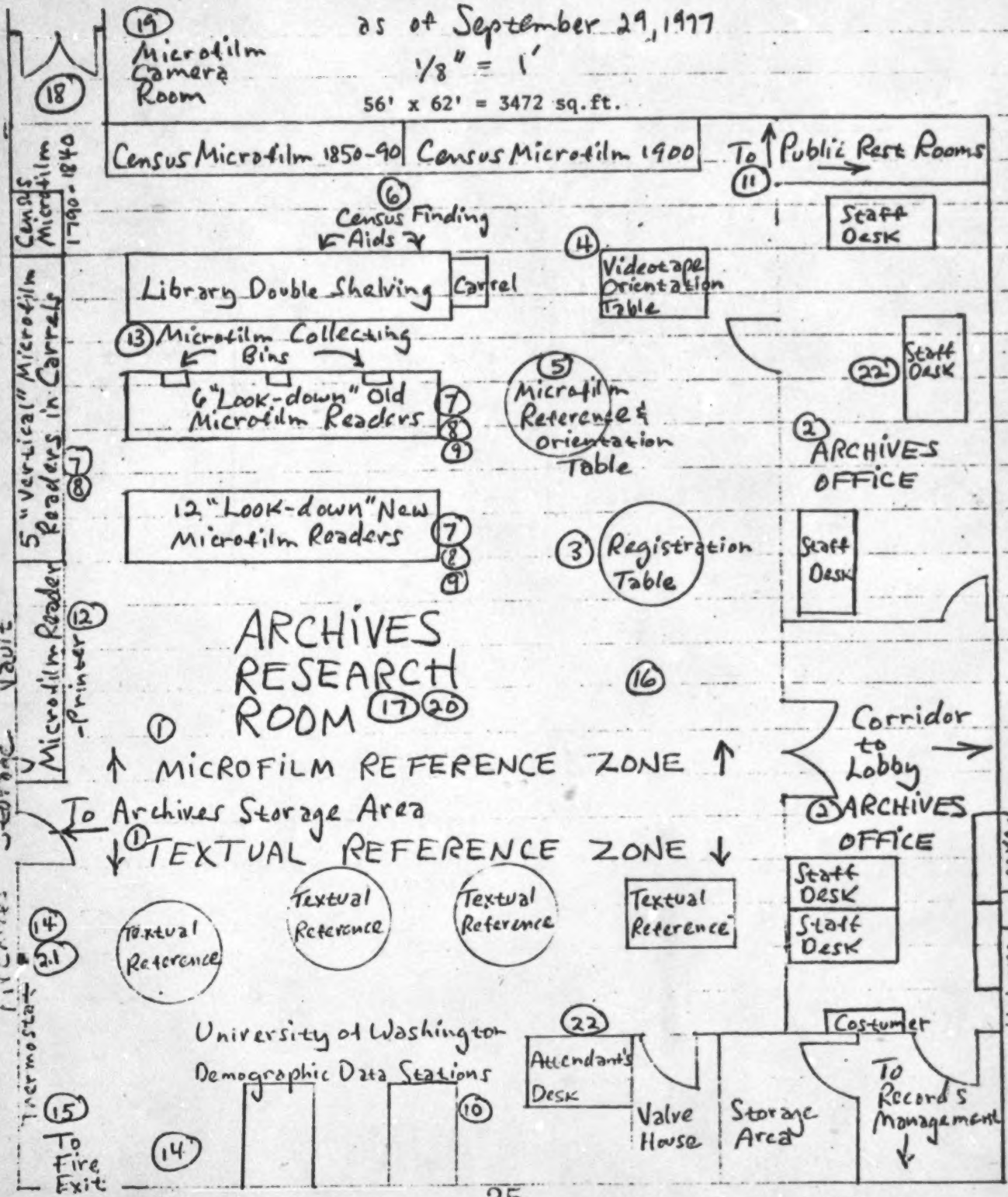
APPENDIX A

SEATTLE ARCHIVES BRANCH
Research Room Sketch

as of September 29, 1977

1/8" = 1'

56' x 62' = 3472 sq.ft.



SELECTED ANNOTATED LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE USE OF FAMILY AND LOCAL HISTORY

by Phillip E. Lothyan

1. A Press Review of "Kin and Communities: The Peopling of America." Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1977. 104 pp.

   A July 1977 compendium of press reviews of the subject of family history. Included are Dr. Margaret Mead's Redbook column on the social value of compiling family histories and Christopher Lasch's bibliographic essay on "The Family and History." The Lasch article reviewed the publications below --

   The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective, edited by Michael Gordon

   The World We Have Lost, by Peter Laslett

   World Revolution and Family Patterns, by William J. Goode

   Household and Family in Past Time, edited by Peter Laslett

   The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays, edited by Theodore K. Robb and Robert I. Rotberg

   Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol. 35, no. 3 (August 1973), special issue on the history of the family

   The Wish To Be Free: Society, Psyche, and Value Change, by Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt

   The Making of the Modern Family, by Edward Shorter

Other reviews focus on problems affecting the American family and on Smithsonian programs.

2. Cutting-Baker, Holly (ed.) et. al. Family Folklore. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1976. 94 pp.

   "The folklore of a family is their creative expression of a common past. As their raw experiences are transformed into family stories, expressions and photographs, the drama and beauty of those experiences are heightened, and they are put into a form in which they can be better remembered and communicated. The folklore of a family binds it together by making its common past accessible, and remaking that past a little closer to the way the family may have wanted it." (p.7)

* * *

We are in the process of exploring the interrelationships among the many forms of family folklore. Each form might be seen as a barge which enables a person to pick up a certain cargo of past experiences, delivering it in certain current social situations. The set of experiences may range from the idyllic and pastoral to the everyday to the dramatic and conflict-laden. The forms may range from the photograph to the diary to the family story, from the baby book to the tombstone. The social situations may range from the most sentimental to the most off-hand moments of life. The study of family folklore looks to define each form in terms of the kinds of past experiences depicted in it, and the kinds of social situations for which it is appropriate.

The forms of folklore represent one of the important ways we give life meaning beyond the immediate present. If we were to simply list all the events of a person's life in numerical order it would look as much like a shopping list as a lifetime. In our minds, we order our lives into eras, organize and dramatize incidents within them. Each form represents a triumph of our culture in supplying us with a way of organizing experience so that it can be communicated to others and to ourselves over time." (p. 8, underlining added)

3. Eakle, Arlene H. Photograph Analysis. Bountiful, Utah: Faisal, 1976. 62 pp.

"This module, Photograph Analysis, is the first in a series of family history study units prepared for use in history, social science and humanities classes. Each unit is designed as a self-contained course of study with examples of how different kinds of source materials can be created, evaluated and applies to family history." (p. vi)

Other modules are in preparation.

4. Eakle, Arlene H. et. al. Woods Cross: Patterns and Profiles of a City. Bountiful, Utah: Faisal, 1976. 60 pp. Copies $5.00 each from Woods Cross City, 1555 South 800 West, Woods Cross, Utah 84087.

As an official Bicentennial history of Woods Cross, Utah, this publication is a fascinating photographic, cartographic, and biographical essay of a small community. The format of this publication should inspire similar efforts elsewhere for historical occasions.

5. Felt, Thomas E. Researching, Writing, and Publishing Local History. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1976.

"Research, writing, and publication of local history present special problems. The historical profession has many volumes on the general problems of research writing, but almost all of them approach history from a national perspective. For many years the standard and only comprehensive treatment of the subject was a publication of the Social Science Research Council called Local History, How to Gather It, Write It, and Publish It. Written by Donald Dean Parker, it was edited and revised both by a committee of distinguished historians under the chairmanship of the late Roy F. Nichols, and by Bertha E. Josephson, a member of the editorial board of the American Association for State and Local History.

The effectiveness of this collective effort is attested by the fact that it remained the standard for three decades. But before the book went out of print in 1974, it had become apparent that local historians needed a new treatment of the subject--something that would reflect the important advances that have taken place in recordkeeping, research tools, and printing technology." (pp. vii, viii)

6. Robertson, James (ed.). Old Glory, A Pictorial Report on the Grass Roots History Movement and The First Hometown History Primer. New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1973. 191 pp.

"History, it turns out, is what we make it. Perhaps that is the principal message of this book--as seen in the actions of all the people whose work is represented on the preceding pages. Each of them has found a way to become personally responsible for a small piece of the history of America. And though this is seldom put into words, each has reclaimed his own roots in the bargain.

The strength and power of many people at work to save the history of the land is beginning to make itself felt. It is both a social process, and at the same time, a deeply personal one. That is the secret of its strength. Its significance, on a large scale, can't be tested. But its importance in the lives of individuals and communities is unquestionable." (p. 191)

7. Russo, David J. Families and Communities: A New View of American History. Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History, 1974. 322 pp.

"Instead of beginning at the national level and maintaining the national perspective traditional in writing American history, says Russo, why not examine the American experience the other way around? Why not view American history as the progressive 'nationalization' of life originally organized at local levels?

Through the nineteenth century, American living patterns were largely organized on the local level, in the isolated agricultural village and surrounding countryside. The concept of the small town as the most important community Americans have lived in, until our own century, is becoming a focal point of serious historical investigation; the best work now being done in local history implies, but does not spell out, a whole new scheme for American history, one in which the town, not the nation, is the main focus of attention until our society became 'nationalized'." (publisher's book cover)

8. Schreiner-Yantis, Netti. Genealogical and Local History Books in Print. Franconia, Virginia: Braceland Press, 1975 and 1976. Volume 1, 311 pp.; volume 2, 410 pp.

Volume 1, Genealogical Books in Print, catalogs 5,000 in-print titles by locality (State of the Union and counties thereunder) and by published family genealogy. Each title is cross-referenced to a list of vendors.
Volume 2, Genealogical and Local History Books In Print, catalogs some additional 6,000 titles to the 5,000 contained in volume 1. The organization of volume 2 is the same as volume 1. Both catalogs are very useful aids in finding titles relating to a particular state and many counties.

9. Sebolt, Alberta P. Localized History Through the Use of Community Resources. Sturbridge, Mass.: Resource Learning Laboratory, n.d. 40 pp.

"The community provides a laboratory for the development of social science concepts and skills. One way of utilizing this laboratory is through the study of local history. This lab, the world of the child, can provide the scene for an in-depth study which includes all the disciplines: history, sociology, economics, political science, geography, and philosophy. While it has all the values of general history, it involves the student in a much more intimate study of his past. History now becomes a study of their lives and their past." (p. 1)

10. Steel, D. J. and Taylor, L. Family History in Schools. London: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 1973. ISBN 0 900592 60 5. 180 pp.

"We put forward for the consideration of the open-minded primary or secondary teacher, a new approach to history, in which the average child can be engaged upon a personal, original and genuine enquiry. In it he discovers for himself the main classes of evidence used by historians and uses them to study the last five or six generations of his own family. Whilst some attention is given in this volume to traditional genealogical sources, the emphasis has been laid upon oral evidence and upon those forms of documentary and archaeological evidence which are to be found in most homes." (Preface, p. xi)

"As well as its purely historical aims, Family History has important implications for interdisciplinary work and for the relationship of the school to parents and the community at large. History is about people and for the child we have found no better approach to the past than through the study of his own people, his family." (Ibid., p. xii)

11. Your Own American Experience. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1976. 13 pp.

An announcement of a Smithsonian Bicentennial Education Program culminating in the Institution's 1977 symposium "Kin and Communities: The Peopling of America." The announcement quotes Dr. Margaret Mead:

"Whoever our actual forebears were--the original Americans who met the first European settlers or the newest arrivals--this celebration is for them as well as for us. And whatever their origin--whether they came from the British Isles, the steppes of Russia, the great plains of North America, from the cathedral cities or the little villages of Europe, the rain forests of Africa or the sunny Mediterranean coast, from farms or fishing hamlets or the back streets of ancient cities--they have made our history rich and variegated. Through their lives, the life of our country as a free and independent nation has become our common heritage, and the Bicentennial celebration is a way of binding together the past, the present, and the future for every one of us." (p. 1)

12. Washington State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. Ethnic History Series. Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society and the Northwest Center for American Folklife and Folklore, 1977.

No. 1. Builders, Brewers and Burghers-Germans of Washington State, by Dale R. Wirsing.

No. 2. Straw Hats, Sandals and Steel-The Chinese in Washington State, by Lorraine Barker Hildebrand.

No. 3. The Gypsy in Northwest America, by Gabrielle Tyrner-Stastny.

No. 4. Lairds, Bards and Mariners: The Scot in Northwest America, by Bruce LeRoy.

No. 5. They Walked Before: The Indians of Washington State, by Cecelia Svinth Carpenter.

No. 6. The Italians of Washington State, by David Nicandri.

No. 7. The Yugoslav in Washington State, by Mary Anne Petrich and Barbara Roji.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

1. Culbert, David H. "Family History Projects: The Scholarly Value of the Informal Sample." The American Archivist. Vol. 38, no. 4 (October 1974). pp. 533-541.

   Mr. Culbert's "work in collecting family history projects compiled by students at Louisiana State University as an optional class assignment is but part of a larger movement towards grass roots history. I want to explain what kinds of information come from family history projects, and to suggest the scholarly value of such an informal sampling of the changes in American society reflected in the family and the local community." (p. 533)

2. "Everybody's Search for Roots." Newsweek. July 4, 1977. pp. 26-36.

   Newsweek reporters cover the "Roots" phenomenon on the first anniversary of the Bicentennial, probing the sudden search for ethnic identity. A list of genealogical institutions and a select list of books follows the report.

3. Hays, Samuel P. "History and the Changing University Curriculum." The History Teacher. Vol. 8, no. 1 (November 1974). pp. 64-72.

   "The appropriate link between social theory and the curriculum, I would argue, is the attempt to focus history courses on people in the past and their varied life-settings. In organizing what we teach we should come back to people who have particular experiences, display particular kinds of behavior, and have certain relationships with other people. We should constantly recreate for the student's entry into the past a variety of such types of human settings. We should focus on the shared patterns of experience and values of people in history and their differences in different settings. Historical questions arise out of the relationship of people in different circumstances and changes in these over time. And the relationship between students and the past, that is, the teaching process, can be considered primarily at the attempt to facilitate transfer back and forth between the experience of the present and the experience of the past.

   This is quite different from the way we now organize the curriculum, for much of our history is not focused on people. Often, for example, we deal with what historians argue about. (p. 65)

   * * *

   "The most immediate and obvious implication of a curricular focus on human setting is to organize courses not around countries and time periods, as is the custom, but around thematic problems concerning the types of human contexts of life." (p. 66)

   * * *

"There is one other principle of curricular organization which is implied by all this: courses should be comparative as between different expressions of similar human settings. ... The history of the family, for example, provides comparisons and contrasts from every continent and from widely varying periods of time. The method of inquiry, and the method of teaching as well, involves the constant question: how is this phenomenon--the family--similar in all these cases and how is it different? In what way is the response to modernization in one time and place similar to that in another and how is it different?" (Ibid.)

* * *

"Each year I have my students write a four-generation family genealogy. Into this genealogy I urge them to bring transformations of religion, place of residence, education, vertical mobility, generational relationships, almost every aspect of human life that can be seen through the context of the family. Invariably the student is brought face to face with the interaction between the past and present." (p. 70)

4. Hays, Samuel P. "History and Genealogy: Patterns of Change and Prospects for Cooperation." Prologue: The Journal of the National Archives, Vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 1975). pp. 39-43.

   In the first of three articles appearing in consecutive issues of Prologue, Dr. Hays outlines developments in the fields of family and local history that bring together the interests of scholars and genealogists. Later articles develop the implications for genealogists and archivists.

5. Jeffrey, Kirk. "Varieties of Family History." The American Archivist. Vol. 38, no. 4 (October 1975). pp. 521-532.

   Mr. Kirk discusses "some of the trends in research and overall interpretation in American family history. Rather than offer a bibliographical survey or a discussion of the role of the social sciences in family history--a task already accomplished by Tamara K. Hareven--[5] I want to survey the very broad schools of thought in the field and to note some of the important debates about how to proceed. I shall suggest a few of the basic findings upon which family historians seem to be converging at this still preliminary stage in the development of the field. My comments will, then, be a guide to what is going on rather than a thorough look at techniques or at some of the important issues of theory which family historians discuss." (*p. 522 n.5:"Hareven, 'The History of the Family as a Research Field'; Richard Jensen, 'Archives and Ancestors: The Study of the American Family,' paper delivered before the SAA and the Society of California Archivists, San Francisco, December 1973."

6. Kyvig, David E. "Family History: New Opportunities for Archivists." The American Archivist. Vol. 38, no. 4 (October 1975). pp. 509-519.

"Family history is a field which offers exciting new opportunities for archivists seeking to further knowledge, presents them with new problems as well, and requires that they move beyond traditional conceptions of their professional responsibilities. It is much too early to know all the answers or even all the questions which archivists must contend with in dealing with this rapidly developing field. What follows is intended as suggestive rather than prescriptive and merely seeks to direct archivists' attention to some of the special possibilities presented by the family history movement." (pp. 510-511)